

Chapter 9

Alternate Portfolio Assessment

Rationale and Participation Guidelines

The Kentucky Alternate Portfolio (KAP) is the assessment vehicle for students with disabilities who cannot participate in the regular Commonwealth Accountability Testing System, even with the provision of program accommodations or modifications or both. These are students with documented cognitive disabilities typically ranging in the moderate to severe functioning levels.

When addressing the issues of student assessment and program accountability, it is important that all students be included in such endeavors. In this effort, the Kentucky Alternate Portfolio was developed and has been implemented since 1991. The Kentucky Alternate Portfolio was developed by a team of Kentucky special education teachers, local school administrators, and Kentucky Department of Education and University of Kentucky staff to reflect educational outcomes that are important for all students, including those with moderate to severe disabilities and that are consistent with the Kentucky Education Reform Act.

Contents

The Kentucky Alternate Portfolio has a set of required elements modeled after the Kentucky Writing Portfolio contents. Each portfolio must include a Table of Contents, Letter to the Reviewer, Parent Validation Letter, an Individualized Schedule reflecting the student's mode of communication, and five (5) entries consisting of samples of the student's best work.

The entries may include work collected over time and should reflect instruction toward the achievement of the Kentucky Learner Goals and Academic Expectations. The Kentucky Alternate Portfolio is specifically based upon a subset of these standards, but may and should show examples of work toward other expectations as necessary. Appendix 9 contains a listing of this subset.

In previous years, entries were all selected by the choice of the student with teacher and peer input. The number of required entries was 7 to 10 and entries, were primarily activity-based, and typically did not reflect instruction over time in content areas. The entry types beginning in the 98-99 school year now follow the curriculum advanced in the Kentucky Program of Studies and are grade level specific. Table 9.1 identifies the entries required by grade.

Table 9.1
ALTERNATE PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

<p>A complete portfolio will include the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A table of contents (written, pictorial, audio/videotape) • A letter to the reviewer that describes the portfolio contents (written, pictorial, audio/videotaped) • A letter from the parent validating contents of the portfolio • An individualized daily schedule with description and documentation of student use • 8th & 12th grade vocational entries: career exploration (at least 3 relevant activities) and a formal résumé, respectively • Student mode of communication consistently evidenced throughout • Five entries from the following areas (official entry cover sheets are required and can be found in Appendix 9). 			
Entry Types	4 th Grade	8 th Grade	12 th Grade
Language Arts	X	X	X
Math	X	X	C
Science	X	C	C
Social Studies	X	C	C
Arts & Humanities	C	C	C
Health and PE	C	C	C
Vocational	N/A	X	X
<p>X = Required C = Choice N = Not Applicable</p> <p>These entry types are directly linked to the Academic Expectations in both <u>Transformations</u> and the <u>Program of Studies</u>. The <u>Program of Studies</u> document is available on KDE's web site. This document, coupled with collaboration among teachers in the building, should yield a wealth of ideas for entries that also support the participation of non-disabled peers. Suggestions for developing entries can be found on pages 42-50. <u>TASKS</u>, an additional support document, can also be found on the web at http://www.ihdi.uky.edu. <u>TASKS</u> highlights the multiple ways that students with diverse learning needs can evidence performance of the academic expectations while participating in regular education activities directly related to the <u>Program of Studies</u>. Both of these resources should be helpful in developing and implementing instructional activities that can be used in portfolio entries.</p>			

Scoring

Kentucky Alternate Portfolios are scored at grades 4, 8, and 12. This may have a slight variation since the student himself/herself is included in the accountability cycle as a result of age. A student in alternate assessment is considered to be a fourth grader if he/she is 9 or 10 on October 1 (but no older than 11), an eighth grader if he/she is 13 or 14 on October 1 (but no older than 15), and a twelfth grader when he/she is 18 on October 1 or in the last anticipated year of school.

Kentucky Alternate Portfolios were scored according to a revised rubric, more effectively reflecting the new entry types. This is another caution when attempting to compare scores from 98-99 to scores from other years. The rubric is described in Table 9.2. The rubric reflects best practice instruction in special education, containing information regarding student progress, self-planning/monitoring/evaluation, multiple settings for instruction, supports, social relationships, student choice, and work toward standards set for all students.

Table 9.2
Alternate Portfolio Scoring Rubric

	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient	Distinguished
Performance	Student participates passively in portfolio products. No clear evidence of performance of specifically targeted IEP goals/ objectives. Little or no linkage to Academic Expectations.	Student performs specifically targeted IEP goals/ objectives that are meaningful in current and future environments. Planning, monitoring and evaluating are limited or inconsistent. Some evidence of Academic Expectations.	Student work indicates progress on specifically targeted IEP goals/ objectives that are meaningful in current and future environments. Student consistently plans', monitors, and evaluates own performance. Academic Expectations clearly evidenced in most entries	Student work indicates progress on specifically targeted IEP goals/ objectives that are meaningful in current and future environments. Planning, monitoring, and evaluating progress is clearly evident. Evaluation is used to extend performance. Extensive evidence of Academic Expectations in all entries
Settings	Student participates in limited number of settings.	Student performs targeted IEP goals/ objectives in a variety of integrated settings.	Student performs targeted IEP goals/ objectives in a wide variety of integrated settings within and across most entries.	Student performance occurs in an extensive variety of integrated settings, within and across all entries.
Support	No clear evidence of peer supports or needed adaptations, modifications, and/or assistive technology.	Support is limited to peer tutoring. Limited use of adaptations, modifications, and/or assistive technology.	Support is natural with students learning together. Appropriate use of adaptations modifications, and/or assistive technology	Support is natural. Use of adaptations, modifications, and/or assistive technology evidences progress toward independence.
Social Relationships	The student has appropriate but limited social interactions.	The student has frequent, appropriate social interactions with a diverse range of peers.	The Student has diverse, sustained, appropriate social interactions that are reciprocal within the context of established social contacts.	The student has sustained social relationships and is clearly a member of a social network of peers who choose to spend time together.
Contexts	Student makes limited choices in portfolio products. Products are not age-appropriate	Student makes choices that have minimal impact on student learning in a variety of portfolio products. All products are age-appropriate.	Student consistently makes choices that have significant impact on student learning. All products are age-appropriate	The student makes choices that have significant impact on student learning within and across all entries. All products are age-appropriate.

The primary scoring of Kentucky Alternate Portfolios was done regionally with teams of two special education teachers scoring portfolios from districts other than their own. Each portfolio was scored two times by two different teams. If the holistic scores of those teams matched, that was the final score assigned to that portfolio. If the scores did not match, the portfolio was scored a third time by another team or a state-certified scorer. The two matching scores were the final, assigned score for that portfolio.

In instances where a teacher did not agree with the final score assigned to his/her student's portfolio, an appeals process was in place. In these cases, the teacher took the portfolio back to his/her district, scored it him/herself, and wrote a rationale outlining the points of disagreement and explaining why the portfolio should have been scored differently. The teacher then sent the portfolio to the Kentucky Alternate Portfolio project office where it was assigned to be scored by a state scorer. The score assigned by that state scorer was the final score for the portfolio. State scorers are teachers who have received extra training in scoring alternate portfolios and have demonstrated competencies in this area.

Kentucky Alternate Portfolio scores were aggregated into each school's total accountability index, resulting in that school's accountability for all students. The Kentucky Alternate Portfolio score for any specific student was entered into all seven of the assessment areas (reading, math, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living and vocational studies, and writing) for that level (elementary, middle, or high school. Table 9.3 illustrates this below.

Table 9.3
Grade Levels and Content Areas incorporating KAP

	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies	Arts & Humanities	Practical Living/ Vocational Studies	Writing
4th Grade	X		X				X
5th Grade		X		X	X	X	
7th Grade	X		X				X
8th Grade		X		X	X	X	
10th Grade	X					X	
11th Grade		X	X	X	X		
12th Grade							X

Monitoring the System

Scoring consistency was based upon the agreement between the two team scores done at the regional level. The scorers of the Kentucky Alternate Portfolios were special education teachers who received training similar to that received for scorers of the writing portfolio. Training consisted of a full day, mandatory session in each region in which the morning focused upon clarifications of the rubric and the afternoon was spent in guided practice of scoring benchmark portfolios.

Alternate Portfolio Reliability or Consistency

For the school year 1998-1999, a total of 928 alternate portfolios were submitted for scoring. Fourth grade portfolios totaled 302, eighth grade portfolios totaled 388, and twelfth grade totaled 238.

The numbers of portfolios having initial agreement in scores between the two teams of scorers were 172 for the 4th grade, 217 for 8th, and 122 for 12th. The percentages of agreements in scores were as follows:

- 4th grade – 56%
- 8th grade – 55%
- 12th grade – 51%.

The two-year inter-rater agreement for all grade levels combined is approximately 55% (weighted by number of students at each grade).

Several factors may have adversely influenced reliability for the 98/99 school year. This was the first year for a significant change in the portfolio itself, evolving from an activity-based to a content-based document. This change in entry types began to move instruction from IEP-based curriculum to a general curriculum focus, necessitating a paradigm shift on the part of teachers/scorers. The other significant change was one of leadership. The original State Coordinator for the Alternate Portfolio Project left her position in January of 1999 and the vacancy was filled with a new coordinator.